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Paganism Not Abolished

IN THE

ROMAN EMPIRE, OR THE
CHRISTIAN WORLD.

A LECTURE,

BY

CHARLES EARL PRESTON.

*Delivered in Boston, Feb. 6th ; New Bedford, April 23rd ;
and Lawrence, Mass., Oct. 16th, 1881.*

"THY WORD IS TRUTH."



The Solid Foundation of Protestantism.

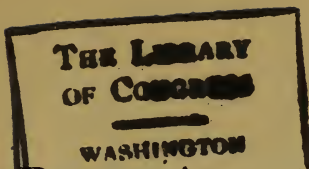
BOSTON, MASS.

1881.

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PAGANISM NOT ABOLISHED

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ROMAN EMPIRE, OR CHRISTIAN WORLD.



BRETHREN AND FRIENDS :—The announcement made in the proposition demands a few preliminary thoughts, and I trust you will bear with me while I give expression to the same.

I sorrow that there should be cause necessitating such a discourse in this enlightened nineteenth century; and especially in this our country, which has so long been the pride and glory of the Reformation—emphatically, PROTESTANT America!

I appear before you an anti-Ritualist; but before proceeding, desire you to understand this position is not taken by me for the sake of being an anti-Ritualist, much less for publicity, notoriety or sensational advantage.

I have shaken off the charming incumbrance of Ritualism (that weight of ages), and stepped to the front in defence of primitive and apostolical Christianity!

But I purpose not, either to disregard aught of existing good which may be found in all parts of the Church, or to appear as an apologist for one or more of its parties. I simply come before you to reveal and warn against the secret, underlying current of Ritualism—fast reaching its way into the professed Protestant Church.

The task is painful,—I say, painful, because some of my

brethren in various parts of the Church must necessarily be offended: those perfectly honest but blinded, as I also myself once was, will doubtless depart from here in sadness.

Now, while I speak of unseen evils prevalent in the Church, I would be the last to rudely pronounce judgment, or assert apostasy; or to anathematize my brethren who have been led into the erroneous delusions to which I allude. Nay, let me remark that I believe that the men who are at the head of the movements in America (that is the rectors of the leading churches which I shall name), are Christians of exceptional worth, good and zealous men, but "carried away" with an unperceived delusion. Once for all, individuals are not in question, but a system of professed Christianity.

These alarming things, which it is time to reveal, are worthy of your earnest consideration and momentous attention.

And though my brethren may denounce me as heretical, and say I have grievously apostatized from the faith and truth of the Church; yet, regarding their position equally as heretical and dangerous, I feel it to be my undoubted duty (as it is certainly my privilege in this land of freedom of conscience and religious thought), to speak of those things which so threaten the peace and comparative prosperity of our Protestant Church.

I now ask your earnest prayers and attention.

You will find the foundation of my remarks in St. Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians, first chapter, and ninth and tenth verses (I Thess. 1 : 9, 10) :—

"Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, . . . Jesus."

Paganism *not* abolished, on that which is now called

“Christian soil”: a strange assertion, yet a true one, as I proceed to prove.

The circumstances under which these inspired words of Holy Scripture were written, were somewhat as follow: The greater number of the little band called “the Church” at Thessalonica, had been, previous to their acceptance of the Gospel, heathen Gentiles, and thus the holy apostle, speaking of their past condition—that of “worshiping dumb idols,” contrasts it with their present—that of serving the living and true God, and consequently holds out to them a hope of reward for their present service.

It is now more than eighteen hundred years since the introduction of the only perfect and successful religion. Previous to, and at the foundation of this system, the whole world, with the exception of a few of Abraham’s descendants, was lying in the darkness of heathendom. The great object of Christianity was to abolish the worship of dumb idols, “gods that see and hear not,” lifeless gods; and to establish among mankind the worship of the true and living God; to reconcile to God through the mediation of His Son, the Founder of this true religion, the whole human family. The “Revealer of God” *to* flesh, and “God revealed” *in* flesh, as the foundation for the future immortality of the race (“as many as believe”), was the immutable design of the Infinite.

It will be well, in order that we may clearly apprehend our subject, to notice briefly the *false* systems of Pagan philosophy, the outgrowth of which (as personal fame), has resulted the grossest idolatry.

Among the list of heathen philosophers perhaps there is none older than Zoroaster, who flourished about 1500 B.C. His work, the “Zend Avesta” (Zoroastrian scriptures), was held in high esteem among his native people, the Persians. The principles therein advocated are two con-

flicting elements, good and evil; the former eventually prevailing, and the latter cast into the darkness whence it originated, with all infernal beings. He was probably, as reputed, an extraordinary man: at once a legislator, prophet, pontiff and philosopher; and lived nearly contemporary with Cyrus, king of Persia.

Next came Pythagoras, the celebrated philosopher of antiquity, born at Samos, Asia Minor. The date of his birth is uncertain, but is conceded by nearly all to have been previous to the appearance of Buddha. He is said to have been the first who made use of the term "philosopher," applying it to himself; and was considered by his contemporaries as standing in close connection with the gods. He travelled much, even into Egypt, Arabia, Judea, Babylon and India; from which, doubtless, his wide range of teachings sprang. He made great discoveries in astronomy, mathematics and music. His character was that of a priest, as well as a philosopher; always desiring to have influence over the minds of his fellow-men. He was the founder and leader of a secret brotherhood called after his name. He became quite famous; and in his riper years moved to Italy, where he died.

Then followed Buddha—"the awakened," or "enlightened,"—founder of the Buddhist religion. He appeared in the sixth century B. C. The worship he inaugurated was originally atheistic—humane and moral, but long since has become idolatrous, its founder and kindred beings being worshiped. Its adherents are found in Central and Eastern Asia and in the Indian Islands.

The next teacher, and one of the most noted, was Confucius, the Chinese philosopher, born in 551 B. C. An ancient tradition records his birth as miraculous. It declares, that just previous to that birth there was left in a

garden by a supernatural being a stone, upon which was written, "A child is about to be born, as pure as the crystal wave; he shall be a king without any domain [that is, 'territorial domain']." He became a public teacher at the age of twenty-two, and died in 478 B. C.—eight years before the birth of Socrates. Hence the world was eight years without a Pagan philosopher!

The next character was Socrates, founder of the Grecian philosophy, whom Cicero has styled the "Father of philosophy." He was born at Athens in 470 B. C. Most all are familiar with the remarkable history of the latter part of his life; his prolonged conversations upon the notion of the immortality of the soul (upon which doubtless he was the greatest reasoner); and last, his enforced death by the drinking of poison.

Next we see Plato—"broad;" so named by his father on account of the broadness of his physical frame. He was born in 429 B. C. At twenty years of age he became a pupil of Socrates, and was a faithful scholar until his death. He traveled much among the Eastern nations, from whom he gained a knowledge of Zoroastrian literature; and it is not improbable that his travels resulted in a wider diffusion of Egyptian mythology. He doubtless put in form, for later posterity, the great doctrine taught by Socrates, the immortality of the soul, as it has since been called "Platonism." It is said he was writing when he died.

From this same school Aristotle dates his rise. He was born 384 B. C. Plato, to whom he was long a pupil, called him the "intellect" of his school. He has been said by some writers to have been "the most remarkable man that ever lived."

I have now given a brief summary of Heathen philosophers.

Philosophy, and consequent idolatry, at the time of the introduction of our holy religion (Christianity) into the world, had its seat at the capital of the Roman empire and of the Western world—Rome! That mighty city!—Mistress of the world!—founded in 753 B.C., whose walls, at first four miles in circumference, had in them three gates, spread in the time of Pliny to twenty miles and thirty-seven gates; at present, about fourteen or fifteen miles, with sixteen gates, some however built up. In whose heart centered thirty-one public roads, having twenty Pagan temples, the principal being those of Jupiter, Minerva and Juno; its theatres in full blast, and its double theatre, “amphitheatre,” erected by Titus, the spectacle of pleasure for sensual Romans; its Coliseum—named from a colossal statue of Nero near by,—the scene of all manner of “beast fights;” the seat of Grecian and Corinthian art, transferred in honor to the seat of the emperor; a city filled with riches and artistic skill, consequent upon the conquests of Philip of Macedon and Antiochus of Syria,—*there* was where Paganism flourished!

While affairs were in this condition in the world, the silent breathings of Bethlehem’s Babe, Calvary’s Victim, and Olivet’s Victorious Ascender, reached the ears of benighted Pagans.

The Romans being connected with Palestine, Jews had emigrated to Rome, and were allowed by three of the Cæsars—Julius, Augustus and Tiberius,—to set up their worship in that city; and doubtless some of them there heard the “good news” of transactions in their native land, for which they immediately set out. There arrived, they were numbered among the “strangers” who assembled at the first church-gathering on Pentecost; and probably on their return to Rome introduced Christianity into

the capital of the world. This is not mere hypothesis, for St. Paul, on his first visit to Rome, found there Jews who had believed in Jesus as the Messiah.

Those who had in any way accepted the new Revelation, whether Jews or Gentiles, suffered persecutions and martyrdom for its sake under the reign of thirty-eight Pagan emperors.

The tyrannical tortures of Nero and others, who commanded that Christians should be bound in skins and thrown to wild beasts, and wrapt in inflammable robes to be burnt as torches to light the night-games of revelry and wickedness, need not here be pictured.

Eventually, there came a radical change in the *name* of things.

Constantine, the last Pagan emperor, became convinced of the Divine authority of Christianity, and was willing to be called by the humble Name first heard at Antioch.

At this time the Church was under Episcopal government (that is, was governed by bishops), and a number of these bishops were those who have long since been called church "fathers." These men (probably most of them had been converted from Paganism) had brought into the Church the prevalent heathen ideas of altar, sacrifice, and priesthood (originally Jewish, but entirely "*done away*" in Christ), and applied them to various things to which they were best adapted. Thus, not being under the necessity of giving up Paganism entirely, Constantine the more readily accepted Christianity.

Then came one of the greatest epochs known in history, — heathen temples were converted into Christian churches, and the magnificent buildings used for public purposes, such as meetings of the senate, counsellors' client-rooms, and bankers' places of business, were made places of Christian worship. Constantine gave his own palace on

one of the "seven hills" for the site of a Christian temple, and the original St. Peter's church, which stood for twelve centuries, was built upon the ruins of temples consecrated to Apollo and Mars.

At this time Symbolism, in its various attractive forms, came into the Church like a flood; in fact, the Church accepted the glory of the world, — that which her Head, our blessed Lord, rejected, — and became an idolatrous and adulterous bride.

Paganism was *transferred into Christianity!* Philosophy, which has ever accompanied idolatry (since its development into it), was introduced, and the very *title* ascribed to the emperor, *Pontifex Maximus*, — the master bridge-builder, — was received by the assumed head of the Church. And so much was the new system like the old, that Julian, called by the Catholic church "the *Apostate*," thought he would make a clear work of the matter, and *return*, — which he did!

Rome, the former seat of Heathendom, has since been known as the seat of Pagan Christianity!

I have now elucidated my proposition, and it has driven me on to Christian soil.

This was that age called the "age of councils," when "undivided [Pagan] Christendom" was in its glory.

The most noted of all the councils was that of Nicea, in 325, when between two hundred and nineteen and two hundred and fifty bishops, with Constantine in the chair, (and from their ideas of regeneration a Pagan emperor still, an *unbaptized* man, *not* a Christian), met to discuss and denounce the so-called *Ærian* heresy, and to frame the "infallible" belief of universal Christendom.

These so-called "early fathers" (who doubtless were good, honest, Christian men), were deluded with the idea that the responsibility of the Church to all time was upon

them — that her prosperity or adversity rested upon their shoulders! *Here* the Church had lost sight of the simplicity of the Gospel, and introduced countless erroneous traditions and practices, to which the fathers almost unanimously consented.

This was that blissful (?) period to which the Oxford divines of 1833 would (under pretence) have us Protestants look! “Blissful period!” I say; when, out of thirty-eight arbitrary councils, — from that of Alexandria in 322, to that of Constantinople in 381, — nineteen were orthodox and nineteen heretical! A period when there was never more superstition, distraction and confusion; one bishop, or spiritual head of the Church, condemning and excommunicating the other! Let me give a picture of the condition of the Nicene age from the best authorities,—the early fathers themselves,—the age to which these professed Protestants of Oxford desire to return. Listen to the illustrious fathers! Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, writes: “Formerly, indeed, there were open heretics; but now the Church is filled with concealed heretics.” One of the Gregorys writes: “Nor do the people behave in one way and the priest in another; but rather that saying seems to be wholly fulfilled which was uttered in reproach, ‘The priest is become as the people.’” Again: “But now there is a danger lest the order which is the holiest of all, should become the most ridiculous of all.” Augustine writes: “When we see those who are the strength of the Church yielding for the most part to offences, does not the body of Christ say, ‘An enemy is breaking my bones?’” Usebius, the early historian, writes, that on account of the too great “laxity of discipline, men fell into . . . slothfulness, envying and abusing one another, and not only making war upon each other with arms and spears in the place of words, the

rulers opposing rulers, and the people disputing with the people." Basil says: "Because iniquity has multiplied, the love of many has waxed cold; for now nothing is so rare as to meet with a spiritual brother." And last, the canonized John Chrysostom gives an appalling picture of that churchly era, that would make the lowest and meanest dissenter (ultra-Protestant) shudder. Depravity abounded! He writes: "The tribunals and laws are of no use, nor are instructors, fathers or teachers: some are corrupted by money, others only think of being paid what is due them." He continues, saying, the good were "very few," and that they were "hidden in the multitude of the wicked." Their corrupt and obscene conduct was especially seen in the services of the Church. This is what may be called The Churchman's Millenium! May God deliver *us* from such a state of affairs in this enlightened century. Paganism at this time had taken another form, and from thence down through the centuries of persecution, darkness and oppression reigned,—till the golden aurora of the Reformation it was rampant. I say, "rampant;" for it has still existed in a milder form in some of the reformed churches,—they have never entirely freed themselves from the ecclesiastical corruptions of that age.

From the heathen darkness of the fourth century, Roman Catholicism dates its birth. Popery was in its infancy. Paganism was ripening in a new system! The Church of Christ became a receptacle for idolatry. Soon, the holding of men's persons in admiration, and the worshiping of pictures and images were introduced. It has been said by some ancient writers, that one could not distinguish between a Christian building and a Pagan temple from the arts displayed, only by some of the characters.

Roman Catholicism was, and is but *Paganism, with Christ attached to it!*

Through the long centuries of cruelty and ecclesiastical despotism, the Pagan fruits of the fourth century have been harvested; and now since the Church, or rather a portion of it, has enjoyed a few centuries of the light of Gospel liberty, there is an element "after the working of Satan," within the very bosom of the Protestant Church, striving to get us back into Papal bondage.

The most grievous part of my task is now before me.

Up to the time of the second quarter of the present century, nearly all attempts to decoy Protestants back into Rome were fruitless.

About the year 1833, the Oxford, or Tractarian movement appeared, when there was a professed agitation of doctrines held in the Church previous to the Reformation. This movement, which took an entire Protestant method of working—that of scattering tracts (from which it derived its name "*Tractarian*"), appeared, for the blinding of Churchmen's eyes, to be opposed to Rome; yet holding many of her doctrines, which they asserted had become corrupted. It finally, after a few years of seed-sowing, developed its opposition to Rome by gathering in a rich harvest for the pope! This work was of no minor importance, for it swept off the very best of Oxford.

A few years later, there appeared another movement in Europe—unlike the Oxford (entirely un-churchly, and evangelical in character)—which has assumed alarming proportions; and arrogated to itself that honored title of Nicene origin, over which three of the oldest established portions of Christendom are contending, namely: "One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church."

These two movements may be termed emphatically, the offspring of the *last* century. They were doubtless brought about as a result of the state of religious society consequent upon the upheavings of the French Revolution. They both seemed to ripen for work nearly contemporaneously, are still living and progressing, and so long as they continue to live, they mean *death* to Protestantism! One claiming to be especially "Catholic and fearless;" the other Apostolical and Primitive! One holding out to Protestants, as an ideal, the Church of the fathers, of Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome; the other holding out the Church of an assumed Restored Apostolate, with all the machinery of Judaism and Rome combined! One under the leadership of Newman, Pusey, Palmer, and others; the other under Irving, Drummond, Woodhouse, and others.

We do not reflect in any way upon the parties connected with these movements. The "Brothers of the Oratory" were men of intelligence, rank and culture. No one can put his finger on any lack of integrity and honest purpose in the works of Dr. Pusey. Indeed, we should esteem him as one of England's brightest scholastic stars. Neither can any man say that the noble Edward Irving, who attracted to his superior orations the nobility and talent of England, was insincere. No, we find nothing against the men; but we discover poison in their principles. While we respect their motives, we should not believe them to be safe theologians. Speaking of this, one of the greatest anti-Catholic divines of the day, upon an occasion, said: "We do not hate Roman Catholics; we do not hate Dr. Newman. I would go to Birmingham and back again, in order to do him a service; and am quite sure that there is not one of you, however much you may deplore the errors of which he is

a victim, who would not sacrifice and suffer in order to emancipate him. And we all feel what is so true, that any man's creed, however erroneous it may be, does not authorize us to treat him who adopts it with contempt, or visit him with proscription or persecution, or bad usage of any kind. . . . We pity the men; we do hate their principles. We distinguish between men who are the unhappy victims, and those deadly principles of which they are industrious and active exponents." These, I believe, should be *our* feelings in regard to the people connected with these movements. Let us pity them, that they have been so deceived, and do all we can to suppress their principles.

Oxford Episcopalianism, in its underlying work of proselyting, declares, that "to oppose ultra-Protestantism is not to favor Popery!" The so-called Catholic Apostolics assert, that the abuse of such *good* (?) things as Symbols, Vestments, etc., by Papists, does not exempt us from responsibility to use them!

It will not be out of place to here notice some of their inconsistencies. First, those of Episcopalianism. It is *not* popish to bow at the Name of Jesus, at the mention of the Incarnation, in the Creeds; but it *is* at any other time! It is *not* popish to use the Sign of the Cross in Baptism; but it *is* to use it on other occasions! It is *not* popish to baptize infants; but to say that they derive benefit in Baptism *is* decidedly popish! It is *not* popish to bow at the Altar; but to speak of it with reverence *is* a sure mark of popery!

Now, those of so-called Catholic Apostolicity. It is *not* popery to speak of water as being a Symbol, but it *is* to speak of it as being a Sacrament! It is *not* popery to use water at Church; but it *is* to have it in bottles for home use! It is *not* popery to use the Sign of the Cross in

Baptism, Confirmation, Anointing, and with Holy Water ; but it *is* to use it commonly as a Christian charm. It is *not* popery to raise the Sacrament in “ Consecration ;” but it *is* to speak of it as the “ Elevation of the Host !” It is *not* popish to incense the Altar ; but it *is* the very essence of popery to incense men !

These are a few of the pretences of the two systems ; their absurdity can be seen at a glance ! The last named is probably making the greatest progress among Protestants. My hearers ! imagine for one moment the members connected with the Apostolate of the Incarnation, on entering a church, plunging their fingers into holy water,—bowing at what is likely to be a dry goods’ box, covered with ecclesiastical drapery, or perhaps a few marble slabs,—trotting about in vestments (skirt attire), carrying a tallow candle, lighting lamps and extinguishing them, swinging incense before a pile of boards called the “ holy wall,” using every form of posture, and repeating Scripture in a sing-song “ tone,” and many other such things, and you will have before you the work considered by thousands of Christendom to be especially authorized of God as a Primitive and Apostolical movement ! Its Liturgy, supposed to be adapted to the present condition of the Church, the greater part of which is taken almost verbatim from the Prayer Book of King Edward VI., and its high order of “ Archangel ” conferred upon many in Catholic countries, are also pleasant inducements held out to Protestants !

Ritualism, my friends, is the threatening foe of the nineteenth century ! Its pretences are a revival of Nicene theology ! It is a re-tracing of steps, rather than a pressing forward.

The Nicene church is no pattern for us. We should look to the Apostolic, upon which our noble reformers

built,—Luther, Ridley, Cranmer and Knox. The latter was in harmony with itself, a perfect unity; while the former was divided against itself, amid the jarring of many contending sects.

Do not imagine, my dear hearers, that Ritualism only exists in England and Continental Europe, and consequently may not trouble you; for it has long since reached our own land—America! Yes, and still nearer home—it has reached New England! Once more—it has reached the capital of your own State! And who can wonder at it, when Protestants give it every encouragement?

It is a fact, that only a few months since a number of professed dissenting Protestant clergymen invited one of England's Ritualists (of the mould of Pusey),—"one of the six Catholics," so ranked within the Anglican Church, — to speak some three hours upon the subject of Ritualism in the city of Boston! And so interested were the priests of his persuasion, that the regular Litany service (of the season of Advent) was forgotten and neglected. The parishioners, after waiting half an hour in church, crossed themselves, bowed to the empty chancel, and departed to their several homes "miserable sinners!"

Is it a fact that "Puritan Boston" is to-day the representative-seat of Ritualism—of Puseyism—the head of the "Catholic movement within the Church of England" in America? Is it a fact that there rests upon the slope of Beacon-hill a Puseyite Church (once occupied by Puritans), the majority of whose members have been evangelical Protestants? Is it a fact that at the base of the same hill land has recently been purchased at the cost of fifty-two thousand dollars, and another such Church, of more magnificence, is in process of erection? Is it a fact that there exists beneath the golden dome of our capitol, a Puseyite Monastery (I use the term "Monastery"

on authority of the *Boston Herald*), with a celibate Priesthood, distinguished by Romish cassocks? Is it a fact that in the same vicinity there is to be found an organized "Sisterhood" after the order of an ecclesiastical female — St. Margaret, whose devoted members are peculiarly characterized by gray gowns, black hoods, and suspended crosses? These *are* facts!

When this work in its neucleus-form first began in Boston, no wonder the bishop (now deceased) considered the "offensive innovations" there "in the form of the Communion-Table, in the decoration of golden Candlesticks and of a large wooden Cross by which it is surmounted, and in the posture used in front of it by the Assistant Minister!" Well did he say in a public letter: "Chiefly do I condemn these innovations upon established custom because of their pointed and offensive resemblance to the usages of that idolatrous Papal communion against which our Prayer Book [referring to one or more of the thirty-nine articles] so strongly protests; and because where a Communion-Table is fitted up like a Romish altar, and certain postures are used by the clergy indicative of reverence towards the altar, the certain effect of such a spectacle is to produce gradually among the congregation those very corruptions in regard to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper from which, by the good providence of God, we have been so graciously delivered." Again: "Those who are familiarized by the officiating minister with the *forms* of error, will fall, by an imperceptible but sure process, into error itself; and thus our people will be led by the very services in which they engage, while actually within the bosom of our Protestant Church, into doctrinal departures of the most grievous and vital character."

How *true* have proved his words! The very "cor-

ruptions" which he mentions, concerning the Lord's Supper, have long since found their way there; the early New England Episcopal faith is scorned as "careless Eucharistic doctrine," and the communicants who may partake of the elements—every day if they wish, as they have six Communions during the week and three upon Sunday,—believe them to be "sacrifices" of Real Body and Blood! Many graduates have left that parish, and others are preparing to leave it—for the Roman Catholic Church! It is not long since its first Rector's widow died in the fold of the Latin Church!

Well did this bishop (on the occasion of his first confirmation there,) manifest his disapprobation of such proceedings, while in the chancel, by unpleasant remarks to the clergy!

All their published "*Reviews*," "*Layman's Remarks*," "*Plain Words*," "*Letters*" and "*Conversations on Ritualism*," in refutation of what he said, did not change the opinions of the far-sighted, thinking public.

This Church, the other in Boston, and one at Lawrence (where they do not have a "large wooden Cross," but a *Crucifix*), are doing a good work for Rome. Many others outside of New England could be mentioned. The following, concerning Dr. Ewer's church, New York, where "high mass" was recently celebrated, is taken from the *Catholic Mirror*: "Dr. Ewer seems to have glimmerings of a desire for something more than the husks which Protestantism offers, and it seems incredible that he and his followers, having sight of the city of refuge, should be satisfied with an empty mirage. Banners and incense and ceremony are nothing but symbols, and worthless symbols without that Real Presence which gives them light, color and dignity." This is the Romanist's careful opinion, which he offers under pretence.

“The tendency of the Church is upward,” say the High Church divines (toward Romanism!!!); and many about say that this is only “a development of Symbolism,” and assert that it is “the outcome of an age which is both artistic and humane.” To prove it, they reason from the lofty beautiful of God down to the fancy of home adornments; and others say, that it is mere “child’s play,” and can do no harm.

Oh, God! give us men who will *protest* against these erroneous practices! They speak to those who have their eyes open; who have ears to hear! Silent forebodings of coming evil are hid beneath them all! There is danger ahead! *Ritualism!* It is in the wake of Rome! It is in imitation of Rome! It is Romanism disguised!

When my Protestant friends ask me, What is the outcome of Ritualism as advocated in America by its two late representatives, Mackonochie and Knox-Little, I can only answer them by directing them to the past! Where?

Where are its *first* agitators and advocates to-day, — I mean Newman, Pusey, and other Oxford Tractarians? Rome alone can answer! I say, Rome *alone* can answer; and I assert, in the full strength of recent developments, that Puseyism in America is the same as Puseyism in England; Puseyism in Boston the same as that at Oxford! It is as unchangeable as its mother element!

One of Boston’s Protestant “fathers” (if I may justly allow myself to use the term “Protestant”) is a graduate of Oxford, the birth-place of Tractarianism!

In regard to that school about us who are so “highly” advanced in their own minds, and assert that in their position there is no tendency towards Rome, let me quote what Newman, who was long ago on their advanced platform, and since a Cardinal in the Romish Church, said, (this of course since he advanced the last step): “Those,

surely, who have advanced towards the Church (meaning Rome), would not have advanced so far as they have had they not had sufficient arguments to bring them still further!" He also said: "The first duty of Catholics is to house those in who are near their doors!"

The *Tractarian* element is detrimental to all genuine Protestantism! The Reformation is considered to-day the same as ever, "a limb badly set," and the "sooner broken" the better! A superior love for the Latin Church is entertained, because she possesses the "Grace of Sacraments!" And this is progressing; its growth is remarkable. A popular English writer, in 1850, speaks of it as "now spreading from a thousand fountains, and by a thousand laborers, through the length and breadth of the land." And we can *now* add, that the laborers have increased to *thousands*; for only at the last session of the Convocation of Canterbury this year, four thousand four hundred of the clergy favored toleration of optional regulation of ritual (so that each Church could have as much ceremony as the Rector wished), against one thousand four hundred opponents!

It is gaining ground *everywhere*, and through its secret operations the Latin Church is being reinforced by intelligent and cultured members! Ought Protestants to stand by and fold their hands in these times? I think *not!* A foe is yet to be met in our free America which will be greater than slavery or intemperance!

"Father" Hecker said in a recent lecture: "Catholicism rules the city of New York with fifty thousand majority; and the question is not now, Will the Catholics *ever* rule America? but, *How soon?*" They have long claimed that this country belongs to them, because its discoverer was a Romanist!

Something bearing upon this we have from their own

lips. The *Shepherd of the Valley*, under the supervision of Archbishop Kendeick, says: "We confess that the Roman Catholic Church is intolerant — that is to say, that it uses all the means in its power for the extirpation of error and sin; but this intolerance is the logical and necessary consequence of its infallibility. She alone has the right to be intolerant, because she alone has the truth. The Church tolerates heretics where she is obliged to do so; but she hates them mortally, and employs all her force to secure their annihilation. When the Catholics shall here be in possession of a considerable majority — *which will certainly be the case by and by*, although the time may long be deferred — *then religious liberty will have come to an end in the Republic of the United States.* Our enemies know that we do not pretend to be better than our Church, and in what concerns this, her history is open to the eyes of all. They know then, how the Roman Church dealt with heretics in the Middle Ages, and how she deals with them to-day, everywhere she has the power. We no more think of denying these historic facts than we do of blaming the saints of God and the princes of the Church for what they have done or opposed in these matters."

This, my hearers, needs no comment. Oh, that all might see, before it is too late, where Ritualism eventually leads!

The ultimate landing-place of those who are on the "incline plane" towards Romanism is *in* Romanism! Thousands of Ritualism's secret supporters are on their way to-day!

There are more Jesuits in America than those who profess to be, — the latter are only known as such, so as to exempt others from suspicion, and hide the real truth.

I may safely assert, with all respect and deep regret,

that many of the clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in our own country are at heart High-churchmen ! More than one has tried (and not in every instance unsuccessfully), to introduce in a Low-church parish the Confessional, Early Communion, Surpliced Choir, Intoned Service, and Altar Cross !

And, my friends, not only is this incoming tide of Ritualism pervading the Episcopal Church of our land, but *it is rapidly advancing its way in many fascinating forms to the midst of our Evangelical and Unevangelical churches!*

I am aware that this statement may sound *strange*, but it is nevertheless one of *truth!*

Through this underlying influence that is stealthily creeping about, individuals in these portions of the Church are becoming impressed with the delusive idea that they have left something in the "Roman dunghill" (as Luther called it,) which should be sought and regained !

The doctrines contained in the Creeds are being agitated. In many things the Apostolical and Nicene fathers are being resorted to. Liturgical service is being adopted by those who once desired to get as far from it as possible ; and certain popish "festival days" are beginning to be observed. Characteristic "window pictures" (some representing our Blessed Lord, the Holy Apostles, and many other things,) are being placed in churches. Vestments, symbolical in character, are beginning to be worn. A flood of ornamental Crosses are finding their way into households and churches ; Catholic hymns, composed in the "Churchman's Millennium," are being introduced, and many such things are advancing at a *rapid* rate among us, and people are so blind that they cannot see in it all the Jesuit hand of Rome !

Only this last *Lenten season*,—I say it with astonishment and grief,—there were special services held in twelve Congregationalist churches in Boston! Sermons considered appropriate to the occasion were preached on Palm Sunday; and Passion Week was observed almost to its fullest extent, the communion being celebrated upon the assumed day of institution “Holy Thursday;” and special sermons were delivered upon Good Friday and Easter! Other churches, equally as Evangelical, also followed somewhat in the wake of Rome.

Although the Churchman, not willing to commit himself, says that symbolism, etc., will “only amount to a matter of decoration” in these quarters, as “they have *no* priesthood,” yet we may conceive how they may soon have one, if things develope as fast as within the last few years!

Listen to what a Rector has said since the last great festival: “The Roman, Anglican and American Episcopal branches of the Holy Catholic Church of history have always upheld the proper observance of those days which commemorate the life of Jesus Christ on earth. This is the peculiarity of the Catholic Church as distinguished from the various Protestant sects, who have no Liturgy. Time was, and not so long ago, when people, in their fanatical efforts to abolish all ancient customs, tried to sweep away this glorious heritage of the Church. But let us all thank God that the days of Puritanic persecution are no more. Permit me to say, that *I, as a priest of the Catholic Church, rejoice to see our Protestant brethren observing the festivals of Easter and Christmas, and hail it as a favorable omen that they are gradually returning to the ancient fold!*”

Oh, my hearers, such things ought not to be! We need such men as the Mathers, Prince and Edwards, in New England, *to-day*, to set things right!

This is food for Rome! She is only laughing at all this! She has long since said that we would return to her by degrees, and she sees sure tokens of it, and I may say inevitable tokens, if things continue as they are inclined at present!

What cares Rome by what means we are brought to her, or how her festivals and ritualism are introduced into our Churches, so long as they find their way there? If we introduce them *ourselves*, we shall be the better prepared for further steps. She is quietly pursuing her own mysterious course, and at the same time attentively watching the developments of Protestantism. She claims us as children; the experiment of the rod has driven us far from her, so now she is determined to employ the gentler methods of redeeming us, through the manoeuvrings of disguised ambassadors! Let us show her that we are *Children of the Reformation*, never more to partake of her wrongs!

Why will Protestants direct us to the *Creeeds*, one of which speaks of a "Holy Catholic Church," a Church *not* in existence at the time of its compilation; another begun in the fourth century, which did not reach its completion till the ninth; and the third by an orthodox or heterodox father (we do not know which, and thought by some to have been forged in his name), abounding with "damnatory clauses," pronounced against those who dare dissent from its teachings?

Why appeal to the "*Fathers*," when the decisions of the various early councils would pronounce them orthodox one year and heterodox the next, and when upon any one point they are seldom found to agree?

Why introduce *Liturgical Service*,—prayers that have been ground out for fifteen centuries,—so old and stale that one is liable to go to sleep while praying? Chrysos-

tom or Ambrose cannot pray for you and me. Their prayers were for the centuries in which they lived, and not for the nineteenth! We do not undervalue the *Book of Common Prayer*, or any other Liturgy; but we should be better without than with them, for the wants of the early Christian ages are not our wants.

Why observe with godly solemnity the *Festival Days* of Paganism transferred into Christianity? The festival of "Saturnalia," the 25th of December, when it is a known *fact* that our blessed Lord was not born upon that date? The festival now called Easter, from Astarte, Goddess of Love, or Venus of the North? Others denominated "movable feasts," which vary every year, thereby causing doubt in the mind of Christendom concerning their exactness, though "fixed" by tradition!

Why introduce "*Symbolical Pictures*," which were the first stepping-stones of the early Church into Idolatry?—the sin of the Greek Church to-day!

Why desire to wear *Vestments*,—the Geneva, Doctor's or Student's gown,—which are but a second cut from the Romish Cassock, and advancers of the Surplice? Vestments! those "rags" and tags "of popery;" in which, as under cloaks of sanctity, have been committed the vilest atrocities, and which were for centuries an inquisitional torture to our martyred Reformers!

Why allow that Pagan instrument of execution—"that infamous gibbet," that *cursed* tree,—the *Cross*, to enter a Church or household where JESUS is worshiped? What a matter of pain it must be to our Blessed Lord, to see His professed children continually gazing upon the instrument of His cruel death—looking backwards instead of forwards! The Cross was not the beginning of Christianity—its *Victim* was! Some about us say it is a *symbol*; if so, then it is one of diabolical wickedness! It would be just

as consistent to worship a guillotine, or gallows, as a cross ! To hear people talk at the present day, one would suppose that nobody was ever crucified but Christ, when *many* others have suffered death upon the cross before and since our Saviour !

I regret to say, that to-day it is difficult for one to distinguish between a Protestant and Roman Catholic Church building from its *exterior* ! Crosses abound on almost all alike ; indeed I have seen *more* crosses upon some Protestant Churches than upon Roman Catholic ; and when side by side, one would think the Protestant to be the Catholic !

Our dear Saviour would have us, rather than be continually looking at “ hay, wood, and stubble,” take up the crosses of life, which are daily found in our path, and “ follow Him,” in expectation of an immortal *crown* !

Away with your crosses ! Your iron, brass, bronze, wooden, marble, wax, paper,—yes, and your picture crosses ! If you intend to be Christians of the *Apostolic* stamp, free your churches and households of them ! But if you delight in such picture-emblems of cruelty and torture, then fill them full of them ! Jesus only endured the cross, despising the shame, for the glory set before Him ; and *not* because He loved it, or thought it a symmetrical form !

Why desire to use the *Old Hymns*,—the “ *Gloria in Excelsis*” and “ *Te Deum Laudamus*,” which abound with the theological corruptions of their age ? Better sing the Psalms, *Benedictus Magnificat*, or other *Scripture* selections !

My dear brethren in the Protestant Church ! *can* it be that you are *blind* ? Are you being led, instead of leading ? *Awake* from this condition, and behold the responsibilities which demand attention !

The drift of Evangelicalism, and I may say that of entire Protestantism without exceptions, is toward Ritualism! Only a few years since, a Congregationalist Church in Connecticut, its pastor and people, went over to Ritualism. The pulpit was removed; the front slips taken out, and a chancel built; an altar erected, vestments of popery bought, and holy water, lights, and incense introduced! A clergyman of a neighboring Congregationalist Church is its present rector!

This is only *one* case; how many more may follow we none of us know!

Another thing worthy of note. It has been proposed recently, by Evangelical clergymen, to have our annual State-fast occur upon *Good Friday*, rather than the usual day! This has been carried in some States!

These, my friends, are statements of truth, and is it not time to awake? Should Protestants look on and remain silent? or should they arouse to a sense of their duty? The foe in our midst is developing, though its workings are imperceptible; which is in keeping with the "mystery" with which Rome has ever been shrouded. Jesuit work has never been open but secret. The truth of this is the key to unlock the whole matter!

Let us, with one voice, *protest* against Ritualism; for it lies at our very doors! Reveal what is beneath that heavy encumbrance which has weighed down the Church for seventeen centuries! Let us "come out" from it all; shake off the coils of this serpent in the grass; shun every *form* of popery; give it no countenance: then the Anglican movement, having its seat in Boston, and the assumed "Catholic" movement at New York, will not come upon us unawares. And if it should be found to exist in our own Churches, let us raise our voices in protest!

My brethren, turn from your Paganism, your “idols, to serve the living and true God!” A sorrowful thought would it have been to the holy Apostle, had he known that these (his) words could have had an application in the professed Christian Church.

In conclusion, I shall make a few remarks upon the last part of the Scripture quotation; for it is doubtless desired by this audience that I should do my subject justice. The inducement held out by the great “Apostle of the Gentiles” to those who were in idolatry, is that which I would recommend to my brethren to-day who may be bound to some small idol. It is that which enabled the first Christians to stand firm and fearless in the hands of Roman soldiers, under the cruel reign of Pagan emperors; to endure the pain of scourging and every other torture to which they were subjected; and finally to suffer with courage the martyr’s death—namely, the joyful hope and exalted privilege of waiting “for His Son [their Lord] from heaven!”

Now, had this concluding part of my lecture been delivered in the first two centuries of the Christian era, it would not have been (as I sincerely hope it may not now be,) considered a sectarian innovation, or in any way a new thing; for they all looked and “waited” for the Son of God “from heaven!”

I am glad to say that this faith is being revived in the scholastic portions of the Protestant Church. Every critical and careful Biblical student, biased or unbiased, admits that the whole tenor of the Divine Canon favors this primitive idea. The Evangelistic Gospels and Apostolical Epistles are overflowing with rich testimonies concerning this cheering truth!

Thus, in order to become fully acquainted and in sym-

pathy with this Scriptural position, one must necessarily “*wait* for His Son from heaven.” We do not wait for things which we are not looking for, expecting; we only wait for things which we believe are coming, approaching! So in regard to the coming of the Son of Man! Human instrumentalities can never bring about the glorious apocalypse of Jesus.

His sweet parting promise to His dear ones was, that if He went away, He would again return to them to take them to himself, so that they could be with Him, eternally united. Oh, what love is there in the thought that Jesus desires us to be close to Him, and this forever! He promised the little representative band, that though they should die during the interval of His personal absence, He would on His return raise them up “to everlasting life.”

In view of all this, how it must grieve our Blessed Lord when He looks down on those of His professed children who do not wish to see Him; who do not desire Him to come to them; are not loving “His appearing.”

It was not till the Church ceased to cherish her dear Master’s coming, and took her seat in the world, that she fell into formality, idolatry and Ritualism.

Jesus will interpose in behalf of His people, before the time of trouble shall come—which is approaching—to “try all them that dwell [those interested in the progress of union of Church and State,] upon the earth!”

Oh, turn from all false systems that threaten the Protestant Church, —turn (I “beseech you in Christ’s stead”) from your “idols, to serve the living and true God, *and wait for His Son from heaven!*”

“Paganism [is] not abolished;” but let us with all our energies endeavor to overthrow it, though it appear in the Christian forms of assumed Catholicity, Episcopacy, or Apostolicity!

What I have here said is in *love* for my Protestant brethren who do not see where they are going. I say it as one who was blinded by the fog of Ritualism myself, and upon the borders of Romanism; but in the providence and mercy of God was snatched from the fate of the "great city" so vividly pictured in the Apocalypse! Heaven save us from the dark ages! Let us rally around the golden sun of the Reformation—the *Bible*—and go forth to meet the foe!

With a heart full of Christian sympathy for those who are yet in *darkness*, I would commend them to the earnest prayers of the faithful. And with sincere respect for my Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Catholic Apostolic, and ultra-Protestant brethren do I submit these thoughts, hoping that some good may be accomplished thereby. May we be aroused to a sensibility of our present duty in these times of responsibility; and be found among those who are free from idolatry, and waiting for Christ from heaven!

I leave the proposition before you, "Paganism not abolished in the Roman empire, or the Christian world!"

"No forms or crosses, nor books had they;
 No gowns of silk, or suits of gray;
 No creeds to guide them, or MSS.;
 Their all in all Christ's righteousness."

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